

Giving to the Department of Physics

BY ELIZABETH CHADIS, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

MARK MUELLER SB '78



Mark Mueller
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*“In the study of physics,
Mark found an intellectual framework for
understanding the world,
as well as a sense of beauty and unity.”*

Within the first few days of his arrival at MIT, Mark Mueller knew instinctively this was where he belonged. MIT offered the intellectual stimulation, academic rigor, and all the problem sets he could ever want to solve. In the study of physics, Mark found an intellectual framework for understanding the world, as well as a sense of beauty and unity. In graduate school at Stanford, he learned to live with the uncertainty that comes with the transition into full-time research. After several postdocs in string theory, a short stint in biophysics, and the realization that he wasn't being offered a job anywhere he wanted to be, Mark left academia for Wall Street.

The demise of the superconducting super collider (SSC) project in 1993 affected not just the particle physicists working in Texas, but thousands more working at universities nationwide. As many physicists were forced to reevaluate their career choices, Wall Street beckoned. They were referred to as POWS—Physicists On Wall Street, and some of the firms rivaled major universities with their brain power. The financial world was clearly becoming more and more quantitative and the demand for physicists simply exploded. Mark himself was recruited by Morgan Stanley to price exotic options.

Today, Mark is a partner at Grantham, Mayo, Van Otterloo & Co. (GMO), a quantitative asset management company using quantitative models to trade in the various capital markets. Under Mark's direction, GMO recently launched a new trading division called “algorithmic trading,” which is completely quantitative from beginning to end. This new division has totally expanded the depth of trading previously possible. “Next to theoretical physics, it's the coolest thing I've ever been involved with,” declares Mark proudly. Clearly, he is where he wants to be.

When the Physics Department asked Mark to help with graduate student support, he didn't hesitate. “The Physics community at MIT is really just the people passing through it and I want to help sustain that environment.” Working at GMO, Mark continues to appreciate physics more and more, and as time goes on, his commitment only grows stronger.

H. Williams

MARK SIEGEL SB '90)



Mark Siegel
SB '90

*“The amount of information I absorbed
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is probably equal to everything I have learned since.”*

Majoring in physics was not a hard choice for Mark Siegel when he entered MIT as a freshman. The hard decision was choosing to leave academia for a career in industry. Mark was accepted to MIT early decision and joined the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. To this day, Mark's very best friends are from ADP and he remembers many great professors from his undergraduate days. As far as he's concerned, "the amount of information I absorbed in those four years is probably equal to everything I have learned since." He'll also tell you he has never been with a group of people as intellectually gifted as those students at MIT.

From MIT, Mark went to Stanford to business school, where he learned that the most challenging problems in business do not have clear-cut right or wrong answers like an MIT problem set. "At Stanford, I met people who were especially creative and resourceful, some with incredible leadership ability or charisma or powers of persuasion. It was a very rounding experience for me." But it was at MIT that he learned how to think, how to solve difficult problems, and how to "work like a dog."

After positions with Oracle and Netscape, Mark is now a Managing Director at Menlo Ventures, one of Silicon Valley's oldest and largest venture capital firms. As an early-stage venture capitalist, Mark evaluates the feasibility and potential of many new and diverse technologies. There is no question that, "physics provides a great foundation for understanding at least the basic principles underlying almost any technology." One of Mark's recent investments is a company building revolutionary electronics that operates at terahertz frequencies. The entrepreneur, in this case, found Mark because of his background in physics.

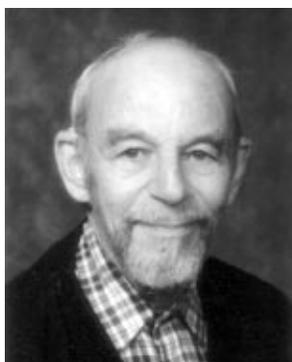
Mark and his wife, Annette, find it extremely gratifying to create opportunities for talented individuals. "It's a way for me to repay the generosity I received from a scholarship to MIT and a fellowship at Stanford." They support graduate fellowships in the Department of Physics because, "the basic sciences are critically important to the advancement of human knowledge and the success of our society. Advances in these fields ultimately lead to commercial innovation and long-term prosperity. If MIT is to maintain its excellence in physics and other basic sciences, it is essential to be able to attract and retain the best talent." We couldn't agree more! The Siegels have created an endowed fund in support of graduate fellowships.

Mark loves his job as a venture capitalist because he spends every day working with intelligent, optimistic, high-energy entrepreneurs. "It's about the closest thing to being back at MIT that you can experience in the 'real world!'"

Annette Siegel

Giving to the Department of Physics

SUZANNE Z. DEUTSCH) *In her estate plans, Suzanne Deutsch has established a fully endowed fellowship to honor the memory of her late husband, MIT Professor of Physics Martin Deutsch. By doing so, she will ensure that young scientists have the opportunities and experiences so critical to their success. Additionally, she will help the Department of Physics reach its goal of full fellowship support for all incoming graduate students.*



Martin Deutsch

“One day, I came home from work and found Martin lying at the top of the staircase in front of the cellar, blowing smoke rings,” recounts Suzanne Deutsch, widow of former MIT Professor of Physics Martin Deutsch. Her first thought was that he had lost his mind, but as it turned out there was something wrong with the furnace and Martin was “trying to determine the airflow.” Common day-to-day problems such as this were not only to be solved, but in the process of doing so, to be mined for any fresh ideas or insights that may not have been foreseen. While the attendant diversions and delays often entailed in these activities led Suzanne to question whether Martin was procrastinating, they came to be dubbed for what they really

were—“experiments” in the household. For Suzanne, they also became an introduction to that which fascinated and gave meaning to Martin’s life: the need to understand the forces of nature and to share the excitement of scientific inquiry with students.

Martin Deutsch was born in Vienna on January 29, 1917, as the only child of parents who were doctors. Helene and Felix Deutsch were psychoanalysts, significant members of Freud’s inner circle. Martin saw himself as “a product of the intellectual culture of Vienna.” In 1935, he came to the U.S. planning to complete a baccalaureate program in two years and enter a doctoral program in one of two fields—chemistry or physics—yet to be determined. He earned his SB in two years, taught and conducted research at MIT for a couple of years before going to Los Alamos to work on the Manhattan Project. After the war, he joined other scientists in speaking out against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In 1946, Martin returned to MIT where Viki Weisskopf and Bruno Rossi had joined the physics faculty. His studies in radioactive decay led him to the discovery of positronium in 1951. Martin spent most of his career researching and teaching. From 1973–79, Martin was head of the MIT Laboratory for Nuclear Science.

From the earliest days at MIT, Martin found the scientific environment and collegial spirit of the Physics Department attractive. Thus, increasingly, his attachment to physics deepened and became the center of his life’s work. While he made many scientific contributions during his career, many of them significant, he believed his real accomplishment was as an educator. Martin had a sensitive eye for talented and dedicated students,

supporting and recruiting them as circumstances dictated. Therefore, Suzanne wants to endow a fellowship as the most fitting way to honor and perpetuate his memory. She feels strongly that Martin would be pleased to know that each year a talented and dedicated person will come to MIT on a fellowship bearing his name.

GIVING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS)

Giving to the MIT Department of Physics is an investment in innovation and excellence. All gifts are valuable to the Department and deeply appreciated. Naming opportunities exist for graduate fellowships, faculty chairs and research funds. A few naming opportunities are still available in the new Green Center for Physics. As important as outright gifts are to the Department, deferred gifts and other tax planning approaches can often make more substantial gifts possible. Through a planned gift, alumni/ae can give assets to MIT while retaining the income. Charitable remainder trusts, pooled income funds and charitable gift annuities allow donors to give assets without loss of income. Bequests can be made in the form of a specific gift of cash or property, or a percentage of an estate.

For additional information on making a gift to the Department of Physics, please contact:

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